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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

28 July 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans (OIR)
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Captain B. E. Wiggin, USN (ONI)
Colonel William S. Boyd, USAF (AFOIN-2B2)
Captain Ray Malpass, USN (JIG)

SUBJECT : NIE 53-54: The Outlook for Afghanistan

1. The attached terms of reference, indicating the allocations of production responsibility, were agreed on at the meeting of the IAC representatives on 28 July.

2. It is requested that contributions be received in this office by the close of business on 27 August.

Paul A. Borel

PAUL A. BOREL
Deputy Assistant Director
National Estimates

Distribution "B"

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

28 July 1954

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 53-54: THE OUTLOOK FOR
AFGHANISTAN

THE PROBLEM

To estimate developments in Afghanistan's internal affairs and external relations over the next few years with special reference to: (1) long-range Soviet capabilities and intentions with respect to Afghanistan; and (2) the effects on Afghanistan of Western-sponsored efforts to strengthen the Middle East, and Soviet reactions thereto.

I. BACKGROUND

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Defense

- A. Geographic. Briefly, what are the physical characteristics of Afghanistan? How have these contributed to shaping its military and political significance in world affairs?

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- B. Socio-Political. What are the social, religious, and political characteristics of the population? What is the nature and basis of authority of the government? What are the principal political forces in Afghanistan? What are the relations of the tribes and the central government?

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- C. Economic. Briefly, what are the principal economic characteristics of Afghanistan? What are the nature of its foreign trade patterns and the extent of its dependence on foreign trade? To what extent is Afghanistan dependent on outside aid and investment for viability?

Defense

- D. Military. What are the strength and capabilities of the Afghan armed forces?

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- E. In general, what is Afghanistan's present and potential strategic role in the power struggle between the Communist Bloc and the West?

II. AFGHANISTAN'S ROLE IN WORLD AFFAIRS

OIR

- A. Briefly, what have been the main lines of Afghanistan's development as an independent state? How did it acquire

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its present boundaries, political system, and ethnic composition? What has been its traditional role vis-a-vis Russia and the UK? How have Afghanistan's interests and international position been affected since World War II by: (1) the British withdrawal from the subcontinent and the creation of India and Pakistan; and (2) the emergence of the power struggle between the Soviet Bloc and the West? What is Afghanistan's present position in world affairs?

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- B. How have the above factors affected Afghanistan's outlook and foreign policy? its political and economic situation?

III. PROBABLE DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

OIR

- A. Socio-Political. How stable is the present political system? What are the prospects for serious challenges to the present government by: (1) other members of the ruling group; (2) the tribes; (3) subversive elements?

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B. Economic. What are the chief economic and fiscal problems of Afghanistan? How, if at all, are these likely to be met? What is the probable extent of Afghanistan's continuing dependence on outside trade and aid? What are the probable patterns of its future foreign trade? What is the outlook for economic development, including the prospects for the Helmand Valley project?

IV. RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN

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What is the present and prospective state of Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan? What is the background and present state of the Pushtoonistan issue? What is the outlook for a settlement? What is the present and prospective Pakistani policy in the controversy? How would Afghan-Pak relations be likely to be affected by a settlement of the dispute? by a prolonged failure to reach a solution? To what extent are the interests or policies of other nations involved in the controversy? What is the outlook for: (1) Pak-Afghan economic relations; and (2) closer political ties, including possible union?

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V. PROBABLE TRENDS IN SOVIET-AFGHAN RELATIONSOIR
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Comments

A. What are current Soviet objectives with respect to Afghanistan and what policies is the USSR following to achieve them? What are the nature and probable motives of any recent changes in this policy? Now, if at all, does it differ from Soviet policy toward other non-Communist states in the Middle East, South Asia, and elsewhere on the Soviet borders? To what extent does the USSR interfere, or attempt to do so, in Afghanistan's internal affairs?

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Comments

B. What has been the Afghan reaction to recent Soviet steps respecting Afghanistan? To what extent may such steps have resulted from Afghan initiative? What is the nature and extent of Afghanistan's vulnerabilities to Soviet pressures and inducements? What are Afghanistan's treaty obligations toward the USSR and how do they affect Afghan vulnerabilities?

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C. What factors are likely to determine Soviet policy toward Afghanistan in the next few years? To what extent is Soviet policy likely to be determined by Western defense efforts in area and to what extent by other considerations?

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Comments

- D. What developments might lead the Soviets to pursue a more active policy with respect to Afghanistan? Assuming a Soviet decision to increase Soviet influence in Afghanistan, what approach would the USSR be likely to take? What are the relative merits, from the Soviet point of view, of inducements as against pressures as against a combination? What form would Soviet pressures be likely to take? Under what circumstances, if any, might the USSR decide to take military action vis-a-vis Afghanistan? What would be the likely nature of inducements in the fields of technical assistance, commercial ties, economic aid, military and diplomatic relations? To what extent and in what ways would Soviet inducements and/or pressures be likely to expand Soviet influence in Afghanistan? What would be the probable effects of such developments on Afghanistan's foreign policy and domestic situation?

VI. RELATIONS WITH THE WEST

OIR
Defense
Comments

- A. What factors determine Afghanistan's attitude and policy toward the West? What is the extent of Afghanistan's present and prospective dependence on the West for commerce, economic aid, and technical assistance? How

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does this compare with its dependence on the USSR? To what extent is Soviet influence and policy likely to affect Afghanistan's commercial and diplomatic policy toward the West? What is the outlook for increased Western investment in Afghanistan?

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- B. What is the present and prospective attitude of Afghanistan toward Western-sponsored defense efforts in the Middle East and South Asia? To what extent is Afghanistan likely to want association with the Turk-Pak agreement? What would it be likely to require from the West in return for joining? To what extent would it allow Soviet disapproval to affect its decision about association with the Turk-Pak agreement?

VII. RELATIONS WITH MIDDLE EAST/SOUTH ASIAN STATES

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- A. India. What is the present and prospective extent of India's influence in Afghanistan? What effect is this likely to have on Afghan relations: (1) with Pakistan; (2) with the USSR; (3) with the West?

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OIR B. Iran. What is the present and prospective state of
Afghanistan's relations with Iran, including the
outlook regarding the Helmand waters dispute?

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Comments C. Turkey. What is the present and prospective state of
Afghanistan's relations with Turkey? How is Turkish
participation in Western-sponsored regional defense
arrangements likely to affect Turkish influence in, and
relations with, Afghanistan?

OIR D. To what extent do Afghanistan's religion and location
lead it to associate itself with other Moslem states
or the Arab-Asian bloc in international affairs?

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